

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9610

USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB, BU

SUBJECT: DOL SEMINAR

STATE PASS USDOL FOR ILA/DSP:GOLDEN; USIA FOR ICS, IEE

REF: SOFIA 921

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY AND, APPARENTLY, BULGARIANS WERE HIGHLY PLEASED BY USDOL-CO-SPONSORED SEMINAR. BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR FURTHER SEMINARS. BULGARIANS SAID FIRST SEMINAR ONLY BEGINNING AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP AND SEMINAR IN NEAR FUTURE BUT EXPLAINED BECAUSE WORK ON NEXT FIVE-YEAR PLAN NOT COMPLETED COULD NOT NOW BE SPECIFIC ON TIMING.

2. FIVE-DAY-LONG SEMINAR ON "WORKER TRAINING AND RETRAINING" CO-SPONSORED BY USDOL AND GOB MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL WELFARE (MINLAB) CONCLUDED MAY 16 WITH AFTERNOON-LONG QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION. MINLAB AND EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES HELD "CRITIQUE" SESSION MAY 17 WITH USDOL TEAM.

3. ATTENDANCE VARIED FROM 20 TO 25 PARTICIPANTS DURING SEMINAR. WHILE ALL SESSIONS WERE ATTENTIVELY FOLLOWED, SPECIAL ATTENTION WAS PAID TO PRESENTATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY BY DR. FRANK MOAKLEY OF CALIFORNIA STATE

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UNIVERSITY IN SAN FRANCISCO. INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGAN-

IZATION (ILO) IS SUPPLYING BULGARIANS \$350,000 DURING 1974-75 AND POSSIBLE \$800,000 TOTAL FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER. INFORMATION MOAKLEY SUPPLIED AND LARGE NUMBERS OF CATALOGS AND OTHER MATERIALS HE LEFT BEHIND WILL BE OF PARTICULAR VALUE IN PLANNING CENTER. NOTING PLANS WITH ILO LACK DETAILS, BORIS VASILEV, MINLAB CHIEF OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, SAID SEMINAR HAS "GIVEN OPPORTUNITY (FOR BULGARIANS) TO SEE VARIOUS LEVELS OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT POTENTIALITIES." IN GENERAL, USDOL TEAM REPORTED BULGARIANS WERE AMAZED BY PLETHORA OF AUDIO-VISUAL HARDWARE AND TRAINING TECHNIQUES NOW IN USE IN U.S.

4. AT "CRITIQUE" SESSION DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOR IVAN SOLAKOV SAID SEMINAR "SURPASSED OUR EXPECTATIONS. IT WAS GOOD BEGINNING, AND WE WILL TRY TO FIND WAYS TO WIDEN OUR COLLABORATION TO HELP US SOLVE SOME OF OUR PROBLEMS AND TO EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE." VASILEV ADDED THAT SEMINAR DEMONSTRATED THAT "U.S. IS FURTHER DEVELOPED THAN BULGARIA. WHATEVER WE HAVE ACHIEVED HAS BEEN DONE IN THE PAST 10 YEARS." SEMINAR HAS ENABLED BULGARIANS TO "SHORTEN PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT BY OBSERVING OTHERS AND NOT REPEATING MISTAKES OTHERS HAVE MADE."

5. AS TO FUTURE PLANS, SOLAKOV AND VASILEV NOTED THAT MINLAB IS ONE OF MAJOR GOB BODIES NOW INVOLVED IN ANALYZING RESULTS OF SIXTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN AND PREPARING SEVENTH PLAN (FOR 1976-80). THUS, MINLAB CANNOT BE SPECIFIC ON SUBJECT AND DATE FOR NEXT SEMINAR UNTIL AFTER THESE "DOMESTIC MATTERS" ARE SETTLED, APPARENTLY LATER THIS YEAR. VASILEV, HOWEVER, INFORMALLY DISCUSSED POSSIBLE SUBJECTS FOR NEXT SEMINAR (RETRAINING AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND ERGONOMICS).

6. VASILEV WOULD NOT PERMIT EXTENSIVE WRITTEN MATERIALS USDOL TEAM BROUGHT TO BE GIVEN DIRECTLY TO PARTICIPANTS; INSTEAD MINLAB WILL TRANSLATE AND DISSEMINATE MATERIALS AS IT SEES FIT. TEAM MEMBERS WERE KEPT FROM MUCH PERSONAL CONTACT WITH PARTICIPANTS DURING INTER-SESSION BREAKS. QUESTIONS FOR FINAL SESSION WERE SUBMITTED IN WRITING AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THROUGH VASILEV, WHO SUPERVISED SEMINAR.

7. EMBASSY COMMENT ON SEMINAR: WE BELIEVE SEMINAR WENT VERY WELL. FROM MINLAB COMMENTS TO CHARGE AND OTHERS CAN ASSUME THIS IS ITS EVALUATION ALSO. VASILEV'S PROCEDURAL STRICTURES (PARA 6, ABOVE) ARE NATURAL IN THIS ENVIRONMENT; MOREOVER, VASILEV CLEARLY HAD PUT HIS PERSONAL REPUTATION ON THE LINE IN BACKING THIS FIRST-EVER

INTERGOVERNMENTAL SEMINAR. REASONS FOR MINLAB'S
INABILITY TO BE SPECIFIC ON TIMING OF FUTURE SEMINARS
(PARA 5, ABOVE) ARE CREDIBLE. WE THINK AT LEAST SIX
MONTH PERIOD SHOULD ELAPSE BEFORE PRESSING FOR NEXT SEMINAR.

8. WE WISH TO GIVE SPECIAL CREDIT TO PRIVATE CITIZENS
OF USDOL TEAM WHO CAME TO SOFIA FOR EXPENSES ONLY.
THEY WERE FINE EXAMPLES OF U.S. EXPERTISE AND AMERICANS
IN GENERAL. FRANK BUGBEE USDOL TEAM LEADER GAVE HIS
USUAL OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE.

9. BEST SUMMARY STATEMENT WAS GIVEN BY MINLAB INTERPRETER:
"WE NEED ORGANIZATION AND EFFICIENCY YOU HAVE SHOWN TO
DEVELOP THIS COUNTRY."
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